(b) to (d) In addition to optimisation of production from the existing and on-going projects new schemes/projects have been taken up by Eastern Coalfields Ltd. (ECL), Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. (BCCL) and Central Coalfields Ltd. (CCL) for proper exploitation of coal reserves in the State of Bihar.

The Coal Companies spend sizable amount from their revenue for the welfare of the employees in the areas of education, water supply, hospital facilities and build infrastructure, such as roads in the colliery areas. Since most of the employees are usually from the local areas, it leads to better living standard of the local people and boosts up the economic activities and development of the area through backward and forward linkages.

[English]

Computer Aided Development Centres

5415. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) How many Computer Aided Development Centres (CAD) under his Ministry and its subordinate office are functioning;

(b) how many out of them are functioning in Karnataka;

(c) whether there is any proposal to open more CAD centres in the State during 1997-98; and

(d) if so, the places where these centres are proposed to be opened.

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Textiles have sanctioned Computer Aided Design Centres at the following places:-

S. No.	Place	Year of Sanction	Implementing Agency
1	2	3	4
1.	Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu)	1993-94	SITRA
2.	Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh) (Transferred to Karur Tamil Nadu)	1993-94	SITRA
3.	Surat (Gujarat)	1993-94	BTRA
4.	Solapur (Maharashtra)	1993-94	BTRA
5.	Bhiwandi (Maharashtra)	1994-95	SASMIRA
6.	Bhilwara (Rajasthan)	1994-95	NITRA
7.	Bangalore (Karnataka)	1994-95	SITRA
8.	Burhanpur (Madhya Pradesh)	1995-96	Madhya Pradesh Rajya Powerloom Bunkar Sahakari Sangh, Maryadit.
9.	Amritsar (Punjab)	1996-97	Textile Commissioner.
10.	Erode (Tamil Nadu)	1996-97	Textile Commissioner.

(c) and (d) During the year 1997-98, there is a proposal to open 4 new centres in various parts of the country. The location of these Computer Aided Design Centres will be decided on receipt of suggestions/proposals from State Governments/Textile Research Associations, Textile Commissioner, and on the basis of areas of powerloom concentration.

Free Import from Neighbouring Countires

5416. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have recently declared more items for free import from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Nepal; and

(b) if so, the details of these items?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir vide Public Notice No 401, dated 28th February, 1997, issued by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade, India has relaxed import restrictions on 180 items if exported from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Nepal, subject to the condition that the goods have been manufactured in these countries. This relaxation of import restrictions has been made under SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangment (SAPTA), to increase the trade with the Least Developed Country (LDC) members of SAARC.

[Translation]

Setting up of a Spices Board Centre in Maharashtra

5417. SHRI KACHARU BHAU RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Spices Board proposes to set up a centre in Maharashtra to give boost to spices;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken for imparting training to the farmers to check heavy use of pesticides for increasing the export of chilly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) A regional office of Spices Board is already functioning in Mumbai, Maharashtra. Further, the activities of the Board on Post Harvest Improvement of Spices in Maharashtra are being looked after by its regional office of Ahmedabad.

(c) Pesticide residue problem on chilli in Maharashtra has not been reported. However, during the current financial year Spices Board has plans to organise training programmes of half day duration at ten centres of production in Maharashtra to educate the chilli growers on post harvest improvement including pesticide residue problem with the participation of State agriculture/Horticulture Departments.

[English]

Silk Products

5418. SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY:

SHRI N. DENNIS:

SHRI PRADIP BHATTACHARYA:

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether target of production of silk and export has not been achieved by the Government during the Eighth plan period:

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps the Government propose to take to meet its target?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) to (c) There has been a shortfall in the production of raw silk and export of silk products as compared to the targets fixed for the VIIIth plan period. During the VIIIth plan period, the Planning Commission has envisaged a target of 21,400 tonnes for the production of raw silk and the target fixed for the exports to be achieved in the terminal year of the VIIIth plan (1996-97) is Rs. 1,000 crores. Against these targets, the achievements anticipated at the end of 1996-97 are 15,140 tonnes raw silk production and the exports of silk goods during 1996-97 would be Rs. 880.62 crores (prov.). The reasons for the shortfall in raw silk production are the stresses faced by the sericulture sector such as adverse seasonal condition leading to a dip in the mulberry area in certain States, erratic prices as well as fall in international mulberry raw silk prices. In order to increase and improve productivity/production of raw silk during the IXth Plan period, efforts are being made through programmes/schemes of CSB focussed on providing catalytic development assistance to industry as well as states and in this effort, the infrastructure created and the research efforts of the VIIIth Plan period are likely to help.

In so far as exports are concerned the reasons for shortfall have been changed in customer preferences and general recession in major markets like USA and Europe. In order to boost the exports of silk products, the Government continues to provide various incentives to the industry such as providing assistance to the Indian Silk Export Promotion Council for undertaking various export promotion activities. Besides, the measures such as the facility of duty free import of raw material under the Advance Licensing Scheme, import of capital goods at concessional rate of duty for export production, etc. are being continued under the new EXIM policy.

Office of the Garment Export Promotion Council

5419. SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal to open offices of Government Export Promotion Council in Maharashtra and Gujarat is lying pending with the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) No, Sir. The decisions relating to opening of the regional offices of the Export Promotion Councils are taken by the Councils themselves.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Export of Coffee

5420. PROF. OMPAL SINGH 'NIDAR': Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantity of coffee exported and the foreign exchange earned therefrom during each of the last three years upto March 31, 1997, country-wise;

(b) whether any target has been fixed for the export of coffee during the current year;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to boost the export of coffee during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) The total quantity of coffee exported and foreign exchange earned therefrom during the last three years is given below:

Year (April-March)	Quantity (in tonne)	Value (US$ million)	Value (Rs. crore)
1994-95	1,37,395	342.12	1096.68
1995-96	1,70,990	456.00	1527.16
1996-97 (provisional)	1,64,403	410.75	1326.40